

Arlington Recycling Committee  
Minutes of 9/5/13

PRESENT: Co-Chair Juli Brazile, Ellen Callaway, Recycling Coordinator Charlotte Milan, Susan Jureidini, Secretary Pete Howard

INTRODUCTIONS: Members introduced themselves to and welcomed Susan. Juli reviewed the charter & activities of the ARC.

RECYCLING COORDINATOR'S REPORT: Charlotte was unable to update the tonnage figures because JRM has not supplied them. The Town Hall has 2 new bins in the auditorium. Patsy Kraemer, Event Coordinator, approves. Charlotte provided a report (Ref 1) on APS cafeteria recycling. She has been successful in gaining the cooperation of all the elementary schools. She expects the students to support cafeteria recycling when they reach Ottoson & AHS.

BUSINESS RECYCLING: Juli & Sue will attend a meeting on 9/16 w/ The Town Manager and the relevant department heads to work out how the dumpster permits will be modified to require recycling as required by state law.

KITCHEN WASTE COMPOSTING: Charlotte discovered that Arlington would not be eligible for the DEP grant she anticipated in June because Arlington allows 3 trash cans per household at weekly curbside collection. Gordon had proposed an approach and with Pete's help prepared a description in the form of a letter (Ref 2) to the Town Manager describing this idea. A discussion of this letter followed. Charlotte, who has been following developments across the state, provided a handout (Ref 3) which outlines the Ipswich pilot program. She has talked with JRM about our suggestion. They would like to work with us to develop a curbside composting program, but said their trucks would not work as we suggested, that no such trucks exist, and if they did they would be inefficient since they would have to travel to 2 different disposal sites. Charlotte suggested that the ARC should focus on public education and building support for curbside kitchen waste collection for composting. She says the DPW will do the research and develop the program. The ARC will consider revising the letter along these lines.

COMMUNITY COLLECTION DAY PLANS: The CCDs will be 11/16 & 5/10. There will be no bag or water bottle handouts. The public is thought to be saturated with these items. Residents will be urged to take textiles to Good Will except for "gently used" items that can be sold. Charlotte will try to arrange a Good Will truck at CCD.

TOWN DAY PLANS: Town Day is 9/21. Members to cover booth during lunch (12-1:30) to give DPW staff a lunch break. Some ARC presence at other times is desirable. Juli will request volunteers on a DOODLE signup. She will prepare a half page handout to be used for recruiting (Ref 4) and for encouraging the reduce, reuse, recycle ethic. Town Day should also advertise CCD & styrofoam collection. Maybe also find people interested in food waste recycling.

COLLECTION BIN MAP: Charlotte has the GPS expert developing the map. She provided the info.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Mow leaves into lawn.

Maybe have a compost display in front of DPW.

TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS (Not addressed above)  
ARC Membership

Survey of residents on ARC mailing list  
MA-DEP Solid Waste Plan Letter to Governor - Follow-up w/ other communities  
Advocate/Patch Recycling Promotion Articles  
Recycling/Collection Bin Map  
Volunteer Opportunities  
Plastic film recycling  
Bulk item collection

FUTURE MEETINGS: Oct 3 continuing on 1st Thursday during following months

Ref 1 Report on Cafeteria Recycling in APS  
Ref 2 Draft letter to Town Manager on Food Waste Recycling  
Ref 3 Notes on Food Waste Recycling in Ipswich & by JRM  
Ref 4 ARC Recruiting Handout



**TOWN OF ARLINGTON  
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August 7, 2013

**Report on Cafeteria Recycling in the Arlington Public Schools, 2012-2013**  
 Charlotte Milan, Recycling Coordinator

**Purpose of this Report**

Arlington began enforcement of mandatory household recycling on July 1, 2012. In order to provide consistent opportunity for the thousands of people who learn and work in our school buildings, there came a need to find recycling solutions for cafeteria waste such as plastic packaging and milk cartons. Paper recycling is already developed and thriving in all nine public school buildings.

**Program Introduction**

With the support of Superintendent Bodie, I met with each public school principal to explore possible program ideas for their buildings. The principals then led the process for their building's staff and students. Public Works offered support by providing equipment, technical assistance and educational material/outreach as requested.

With the support of Food Service Director Denise Boucher, all school kitchen staff are aware that they may request (of the Recycling Coordinator) additional recycling collection containers for back-of-kitchen recyclables such as cans. Corrugated cardboard has been successfully collected and recycled for years through collaboration with the custodial staff.

It has been a pleasure to work with the Arlington Public School staff members. I give the custodial staff a lot of credit for making cafeteria recycling work given the limited storage space inside and outside the Arlington school buildings. In addition, lunch monitors have embraced the recycling programs and offer huge support to the students.

**Equipment, Storage, Collection**

In order to smooth the adoption of cafeteria recycling, simple equipment and procedures are offered by Public Works. School staff members adapt the location and volume of the equipment to best suit their situation.

- School cafeterias use folding metal receptacles with blue plastic tops that have openings for recyclable items. Each receptacle holds a clear plastic bag, allowing students to observe the collected recycling and staff to monitor what is being placed inside.
- In order to pour off liquids, schools use five-gallon plastic buckets which are placed next to the recycling receptacles.
- Heavy duty receptacle bags are supplied by Public Works, as are four-inch lock ties that secure closure of the recycling bags, as needed.
- All equipment is emptied and maintained by the custodial staff or their designee.

- Each building has 96 gallon wheeled toters specifically designated for collection of cafeteria recycling. These toters are left outdoors in order to reduce odors in the building. As needed, school staff can request locks for this equipment.
- Some buildings have secure fenced areas in which to store these cafeteria recycling toters. Others do not. No building has the interior storage space to hold recyclables beyond paper recycling toters. Future facility improvement plans should consider recycling storage needs.
- Custodial staff roll the cafeteria recycling out to the curb in the same manner that they take the paper recycling, where it is collected one day a week by the Town's contractor, JRM Hauling and Recycling.

## **Progress**

1. Bracket: Began in the spring of 2011 with a large-scale school community effort. Their thoughtfulness and dedication tested the logistics and equipment concepts, smoothing the way for other schools to adopt cafeteria recycling.
2. Bishop: Began at the start of the 2012-2013 school year.
3. Peirce: Began in the fall of 2012.
4. Stratton: Began after the winter break in January 2013.
5. Dallin School: Began in the winter of 2013.
6. Hardy School: Anticipated start in September 2013.
7. Thompson: This building's leadership has been in contact with me. They will begin cafeteria recycling when building opens in the fall of 2013.
8. Ottoson School: There have initial meetings and I have conducted observations of student traffic patterns during lunch. This building has complex considerations. There is a team of staff and volunteers who are interested in working on this.
9. High School: In the fall of 2012, students initiated "Tray-less Tuesdays" in order to remove 1/5 of the foam trays used in the building. The cafeteria has offered cafeteria recycling for a number of years on a voluntary basis. However there is no liquid pour-off equipment in place, providing an opportunity for us to improve collection here.

## **Next Steps**

1. I am available year-round to work with school staff and administrators, and I would be happy to provide any portion of this report or expand on it for any audience as requested.
2. I will meet with Denise Bouche in Food Services in order to get her staff's feedback on how recycling went this year and how Public Works can further support this in 2013-14.
3. Each school community may consider additional waste diversion goals that will be enthusiastically supported by Public Works and by the Arlington Recycling Committee. Activities that support goals may include: foam tray avoidance (such as "Tray-less Tuesdays"), foam tray stacking, MA DEP Green Team membership (classroom curriculum opportunities related to waste diversion), School presentations/visits by the Recycling Coordinator and/or JRM Recycling and Hauling, and food waste diversion, for collection and transport to off-site composting or for on-site composting programs.

To: Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager  
Michael Radamacher, Director, Public Works

Subject: Food Waste Recycling Program

**OBJECTIVE:** To determine whether a cost effective approach to the disposal of compostable kitchen waste can be developed and implemented in Arlington.

**BACKGROUND:** Promotional activities, together with the recent implementation of mandatory recycling and per household limitations on trash disposal and the change to weekly recycling and yard waste collection [enabled by our shifting to a new contractor (JRM)] have made a huge impact on the amount of trash that Arlington incinerates each year. Yet, despite these great advances, we feel that are quickly approaching a point of diminishing returns from these types of activities.

As a Green Community, what can we do to further increase our recycling rate so that we can continue to reduce our solid waste disposal costs? One thing to consider is determining whether we can establish a cost effective approach to the disposal of compostable kitchen waste here in Arlington.

Why compostable kitchen waste? Well simply because, based upon a study performed by the MA-DEP (2011) using sample trash loads at six MA incinerator locations, organics make up more than 20% of our trash stream. Further, given the high recycling rate in Arlington, it seems highly likely that organics constitute an even greater percentage of Arlington's trash stream, perhaps 30 percent or more. Our thinking is that if we were to divert most of the organics (compostable kitchen waste) from our incineration trash stream, that we would surely reach our goal of 50% MSW diversion.

We are aware of several companies that will pick up and compost food waste. Yet their services are quite expensive and hence would be unlikely to achieve the return on investment metrics that we would require for such a program (collection/composting would have to cost less than the cost of collection/incineration)

#### Arlington Compostable Kitchen Waste Collection Proposal:

- Test period - Six weeks each - Mixed vs. Separated trash collection
- Test study on one to two collection routes, one to two days a week
- Residents separate and place kitchen waste in a compostable trash bag during separated weeks
- On collection day during the separated weeks, kitchen waste bag is placed on top of the regular trash
- JRM dual stream trucks collect materials, one side for kitchen waste, one side for regular trash
- Compostable materials taken to Deer Island (composting to be performed by MWRA)
- Regular trash to be taken to North Andover for incineration (incineration by Wheelabrator)
- Metrics: Mixed vs. Separate incineration tonnage demonstrating potential cost savings
- Funding: MA-DEP grant in partnership with JRM and Arlington-DPW

**SUMMARY:** If successfully implemented town-wide, this program would help to assure Arlington's continued leadership in community recycling. The Arlington Recycling Committee stands willing to assist you and your team in any way you might suggest to make this proposal a reality!

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Juli Brazile, Co-Chair

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Gordon Jamieson, Co-Chair

## Ipswich

- 3 year pilot
- 165 households (median over 2 years)
- \$100 /hh/yr includes container, DEP grant supported
- 876 pounds per household collected
- New England Solid Waste collects
- Delivers to Brick End Farm in Wenham

### End year 1 cost savings

Tonnage \* \$70 per ton= \$5,059.60

## JRM is interested in talking to us

- Will be working with Brick End Farm and Boston commercial clients
- Willing to be experimental
- Believes curbside pickup keeps separation quality in check
- Would use separate truck
- Can provide cost /hh/yr based on 300-500 hh

## Arlington Recycling Committee

The ARC is a committee of Town Meeting comprised of 8 members appointed by the Town Moderator and one Town employee designated by the Town Manager.

Our mission is to advise the Town regarding opportunities to improve and expand recycling in the Town, to educate and advocate recycling, source reduction and reuse of waste to the citizens, offices and businesses of the Town, and to conduct research and programs to increase participation in recycling, composting, and proper disposal of waste.

Arlington's trash is incinerated and we pay by the ton to have it burned, so by increasing recycling our goal is to burn less trash, which in turn saves the town money and is better for the environment at large.

Help plan and volunteer at promotional events including Town Day and the semi-annual community collection days held each November and April at the DPW yard. These events provide facile solutions for disposing of many items (books, scrap metal, e-waste or appliances, old clothes, etc.) that would otherwise be thrown away thereby reducing our trash disposal costs.

We meet at 7:30 pm at Town Hall on the first Thursday of the month from September to June. Agendas and Minutes are posted on the town website and we have a Google group email list for reminders and to share information and ideas about programs or events that focus on state or local recycling efforts.

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